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Editorial: Silent agony

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By Collin Gaston, General Manager

BIRMINGHAM, AL (WBRC) - *The following is an editorial from WBRC FOX6 News General Manager Collin Gaston, which first aired on Tuesday, June 12, 2018:*

Last week our nation lost two influential people, fashion designer and mother Kate Spade and chef, storyteller and father Anthony Bourdain to suicide. Two highly recognizable names amongst the tens of thousands who die relatively anonymously annually at their own hands; most without a headline, a tweet or breaking news coverage in their hometown's 6 o'clock newscast.

According to a report just released by the Centers for Disease Control, suicide rates have increased in all but one state over the past two decades, with half the states showing increases at over 30%. In 2016 alone, nearly 45,000 Americans age 10 or older died by suicide; that's twice the number of homicides that same year. Among people ages 15 to 34, suicide was the second-leading cause of death in that same year.

Among the many troubling findings in the CDC report was that more than half of the people who killed themselves had no previous known or diagnosed mental-health condition. In over half of the cases setbacks played a key part in the decision with those who decided to take their own lives. Setbacks to include, but not limited to, those associated with health, finances or relationships.

Bottom-line, keep an eye and an ear open with those you know who are under unexpected, self-imposed or unrelenting stress so you can help identify a potentially life-threatening situation and get help them help before it's too late.

There is help if you are or know someone who is struggling. Locally in Central Alabama, you can call the Crisis Center at #205-323-7777 or nationally the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available at #800-273-8255.

Please don't suffer in silent agony, there are people that know what you're going through and want to help. Please give them a chance. You're worth it!

If you would like to respond to this editorial, email editorials@wbrc.com, write to:

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